

THE CEA CRITIC

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STEAMING AS BEFORE

(A message from our new National President, Bruce Dearing of Swarthmore College, delivered at the national meeting, Chicago, December 27, 1955.)

As I assume the duties of President of the College English Association for 1956, I am grateful for the confidence expressed through your ballot that I can serve your interests in the Association. Since, happily, there is very little politicking in our organization, I was not asked to submit a platform. I seize this opportunity to say how I conceive the role of the president, and what I foresee for the organization in the coming year.

If it were up to me as president to set the course of the Association, I think I would wish the navigator's log to read, for the most part, "Steaming as before." The directions pursued by the Association during the energetic and fruitful incumbencies of William Werner and Katharine Koller seem to me inevitable and right.

What this means is steering alertly between the Scylla of an entire respectability and the Charybdis of bizarre or ill-considered experiment. To limit our activities and interests too narrowly to the established and traditional is to forfeit the valuable support of our self-styled "mavericks," those adventurous and imaginative spirits from whom the CEA has drawn a great part of its strength. To spread ourselves too thin, to scatter our shots and to gird at windmills, is to risk expiring futilely in metaphor and song.

Our concerns with effective teaching of English Language and Literature imply continuous and energetic scrutiny of teacher training and accrediting, including the Ph.D. program; maintaining and improving the status of the English major as both educated and employable; regaining status for Liberal Arts teachers and programs in a changing society. Our national and regional meetings and conferences, our institutes, and our working committees offer positive means to these ends. And let me say in passing that if one must make a choice of hazard, my taste inclines toward skirting the clashing rocks of overbold experiment rather than flirting with the spiral to oblivion of timorous limitation. I think such a preference accords with the nature and the history of the CEA.

But, as it happens, the College English Association is not administered in the manner of a Navy Cruiser (I abjure "Battleship" in deference to MLA upstairs) or a Battalion of Marines (even though Max always has a few Commando operations afoot). The CEA is a singularly democratic organization, and the revised By-Laws are at pains to reflect that quality. Regional officers work closely with National officers and directors, and thanks to meetings such as this, and to conferences made possible by institute support, CEA members are increasingly well known to one another personally.

All of you must know that in our Executive Director, Max Goldberg, we have the nearest thing to an Arabian Nights genie that any group wistfully rubbing the tarnished old lamp of liberal learning could hope to command. Most of you will have witnessed directly some of his prodigies of energy and imagination. Every member of CEA is certain to be personally well acquainted with Max, or with an officer or director. This is an invitation to let us know what you think the CEA can and should undertake during the coming year of promise and peril to the profession. I shall then, in my role as ritual Aladdin for the year, essay to rub the lamp to the best of my ability, and we shall all see what Max can bring forth.

ANNUAL MEETING - 1955

In accordance with notices published in the CEA Critic of November and December, 1955, the annual business meeting of The College English Association, Inc., took place in the Illinois Room at the Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois, on Tuesday, December 27. CEA President Katharine Koller

called the meeting to order about 11:00 a.m. It was temporarily adjourned about noon, was reconvened about 1:00 p.m., and was concluded about 2:00 p.m.

The Executive Secretary, Maxwell H. Goldberg, reported the results of the annual national CEA

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Humanities Research As Creation

by Howard Mumford Jones

(A talk given at the Seventh National Conference of the College English Association Institute, Schenectady, New York. Co-hosts, Union College and the General Electric Company. Professor Jones was Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University, 1943-44, and President of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1944-51. Now Chairman of the American Council of Learned Societies, he presided at the Schenectady session on "The Humanities, the Quest for Quality, and the Creative Individual.")

Ladies and gentlemen: My good friend Harry Gideonse's initial reference to a mysterious character, named Harold Lloyd Wright, puzzled me until I reflected that I suppose that this character must appear in that magnificent library of books created by Upton Sinclair Lewis Mumford Jones.

I venture to intrude upon your time in answer to a challenge in the original address by the General Chairman of the meeting, my other good friend, John Burchard, and I would like to submit certain observations of my own. In any gathering of this sort, of course, there develops a quality of vocabulary that has all the vitality of error and all the tediousness of an old friend, and I would like, if I might, to call attention to what seems to me some empty words and some confusion of phrasing, and to return for a few minutes to what I believe to be the general problem before this conference on Liberal Education, Industry, and the Quest for Quality.

One word is the word "broad." In my observations that which is broad is also flat. And that which is flat is often thin. And I have observed, or think I have observed, that a good many bits of education intended to be broad, are in themselves thin, and produce "flat" products. (In view of Professor Richard Adams' earlier protest against reference to college graduates as "product," I beg your pardon for using this vulgar word.) I would suggest that we might get farther on this question if we

didn't fall into the constant confusion between that education which is broad, and that education which is broadening. It is the broadening kind of education—not the broad education—that is desired.

Three other phrases have constantly appeared—liberal education, liberal arts and the humanities. Sometimes they have been used interchangeably, and again they have been used with some slight sense of difference among them. I suggest, at any rate, that certainly the humanities are a part of liberal education, and that the liberal arts are not necessarily synonymous with the humanities; nor is liberal education synonymous with the humanities.

When I have heard so many times that one of the primary ways of securing a broad education is to teach technologically-headed students to write, I submit that the teaching of the rudiments of writing is not the same thing as inculcating a broadening outlook; and that to reduce the work of English Departments to the matter of composition is grossly to underestimate the potentialities of that particular variety of the humanities. What we want constantly is dynamic teaching, and what we want constantly are effective and curious minds.

I submit that teaching cannot continue at the basis, let us say, of elementary composition without being in the end something that turns out teachers who are also not merely elementary, they are elementists. Teaching—to be successful at all—must be constantly refreshed by a current of fresh ideas, and particularly is this true in the humanities. This refreshment must come either from the revaluation of old materials or the discovery of new materials.

Now this is commonplace in all the elementary courses except the courses in the humanities. Take, (Please Turn To Page 5)

*President Gideonse spoke, at Schenectady, on "Liberal Education, the Quest for Quality, and an Enduring Individualism." At the Corning CEA Institute (Oct. 1953) Dr. Gideonse gave an evaluative address later developed and published under the title "On Rethinking Liberal Education." (Pub. by American Council on Education.)

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WHAT SHOULD PH.D. MEAN?

"All those who wish to express their opinion on this matter are invited to write to the author (F. W. Strothmann) of this report in care of the Fund for the Advancement of Education, 655 Madison Avenue, New York 21, N. Y." —

— so ends the text of *The Graduate School Today and Tomorrow, Reflections for the Profession's Consideration*. The pamphlet (42 pp.) was written by Mr. Strothmann on behalf of a "Committee of Fifteen" brought together by the Fund for the Advancement of Education.

The committee is a strong one. Such men as William DeVane, Roger McCutcheon, and C. Vann Woodward did not convene to preside over the dissolution of the graduate empire. Two very general assumptions were fundamental in their discussions: (1) the quantity of collegiate instruction will increase perforce as the student population increases, and (2) the quality of collegiate instruction is in danger.

With these assumptions, the Committee addressed itself to an appraisal of the graduate schools, considering them primarily as training grounds of the "scholar teacher." Many of the questions raised are familiar to CEA members:

Should there be a new, surrogate doctoral degree for teachers?

Should the function of the dissertation be reconsidered?

Should departmental barriers be lowered?

Should specialization be deferred or somehow qualified?

Should new devices of graduate instruction — something requiring student contributions more finished than those characteristic of the "German seminar" — be developed?

Should graduate study continue to be subsidized by exploitation of both graduate and undergraduate students?

Should publication be the principal criterion for professional advancement?

Should "scholarship" be defined as a technique? An attitude? An intellectual quality and accomplishment?

Should college teaching be thought of as a craft? A profession?

The Committee of Fifteen is concerned with teaching in all fields and disciplines. Except for this difference, its essential purpose is identical with that of the College English Association.

Mr. Strothmann's pamphlet was published in December 1955. Copies may be obtained from the Fund for the Advancement of Education.

Henry W. Sams
University of Chicago

Jibberings of an Old Ghost

Not long ago my advice was sought as to the proper style and wording of a wedding invitation. I referred the question to an engraver of high repute, but with one reservation: "This is to be an American wedding," I told him; "not a British one, so will you please spell the word honor without any U in it." When the completed cards arrived I found that the honour of each recipient's company was requested. To my heated remonstrance he replied coldly that no respectable engraver would spell the word without a U on a wedding invitation. "Of course" he added, "if the card was printed, or if it was a house wedding, that would be different; but never if the ceremony was in a church."

How important is spelling? That question was put to me long ago by a college Dean as I sat gossiping in his office, and I answered that its importance was only social. As punishment for that he sent me a young man who had just applied for admission; and I was vested with power to deal with him.

The lad was applying after the academic year had actually begun, which in itself was a high misdemeanor; and I learned, too, that he had just been dropped by a distinguished New England college soon after his admission, which was of course a capital crime. But the letters endorsing his appeal were powerful ones, recommending his intelligence, his background of training, and his personality. The only thing against him was that he could not spell.

The college which had dismissed him was quite frank about it. He had seemed interested in all his courses, they wrote, and had met orally all requirements. But his written work was unspeakably bad, and all his teachers had advised his dismissal. They did not explain how he had passed his entrance tests. We had a long and friendly talk together, that young man and I, on all sorts of subjects. He discussed things intelligently and in well-chosen words. He had humor. He had read many good books and gave shrewd appraisals of them. He was ashamed of his disability, but could do nothing about it.

Then I asked to see some of his papers; they were unbelievable! He constantly went out of his way to spell things wrong. He would introduce unnecessary letters, or end a word with a "que" instead of a "k", or insert a "gh" for no reason at all. He would spell a word in two or three different ways on the same page. His misspellings were not fonetic; they were crazy. I sent him to the Psychology Lab.

which reported that faulty eyesight or hearing might account for such a condition; but both senses were reported in good condition by his doctor. The psychologists offered no other answer, so missed a chance to be really useful.

The upshot of it was that I went bail for him at the Admissions Office and entered into a gentleman's agreement with the culprit himself. If he did well in all his departments of study (aside from spelling) I would give him a passing grade in English at the end of the semester, and again at the year's end. Provided that throughout that year and all following years he would place on my desk at the end of each week one paper written for one of his other classrooms, so that I could discover whether gain in maturity was doing something for him; and he was to do a good deal of extra assigned reading of many sorts.

Of course I had arguments with one or two of his other teachers, but they were good sports and let me have my way. He finished the year with no noticeable improvement in spelling, but with highly creditable records in the sciences, and in all classroom discussions. I passed him in English.

Then came the tragedy: his father died. The lad hailed from a distant city, the seat of a fine university; and his mother wanted her only son at home, finishing his college work there. So you see where that left me! He would carry to that University our college credits for a year's work well done, and the faculty there would get a strange impression of our standards in English. So I wrote their Dean a detailed letter explaining why a student who spelled like a Hottentot had received from us a passing grade. I received a friendly letter in reply, saying that my course of treatment would be continued, and the young man would be encouraged to finish his college course. Then the Dean added, "I am especially sympathetic because it happens that I myself have never learned to spell."

I have heard, at wide intervals, from that former student, — good letters, impeccably spelled. He holds an executive position in a world-renowned concern making scientific instruments. He is a useful citizen, having a wife and children, and perhaps even more important, a secretary.

How important is spelling? I cannot weigh the question without bias, because I realize that Father Time is undermining the foundations of my own spelling, until the whole structure seems to be tottering.

ing. Long long ago I was Teacher's golden haired boy as a speller. Later on I used to mutter certain incantations when I was in a quandary, such as

I before E, except after C,

Or when sounding like A, as in Neighbor and Neigh.

But now I have even forgotten the other incantations. Once it was easy for me to write a troublesome word on a scrap of paper and after staring at it for a moment know whether it was right or wrong. Now the longer I stare at the simplest word, the sillier it looks.

Of this I am sure: spelling is not governed by Law but by Fashion. Fashions in spelling may be slow to change, some of them lasting through the centuries; but however briefly they last they are always arrogant. William Graham Sumner wrote, "There is no arguing with Fashion . . . its authority is imperative as to everything which it touches . . . The dissenter hurts himself, he never affects the fashion . . . The fashions can make a thing modest or immodest, proper or improper, and if they last long enough they affect the sense and standards of propriety."

Good manners are nothing but prevailing fashions applied to deportment; and good spelling is nothing more nor less than good literary manners. They change when they get ready. I have often wondered just when and why it was that ladies and gentlemen who had always spelled words in any ways which suited their individual fancies, suddenly began to accept the dictates of fashion in their spelling. Nowadays any sudden changes are especially revolting to old teachers; but if, as I suspect, "thru" and "tonite" are slowly rising above the horizon we must meet them calmly and keep our shirts on, because they are harmless. They are merely heralds of the future, and are no worse than echoes of the past, such as "gifteshoppe."

Dr. Samuel Johnson inveighed against "Mob" as a vulgar journalistic abbreviation of "mobile multitude"; but, as Sumner says, "he only hurt himself and did not affect the fashion." It is the business of our teachers to point out the ways in which fashionably cultivated persons agree to spell words at the moment; just as they have tacitly agreed not to pick their teeth at the table or have a cuspidor in the parlor as their well-mannered grandfathers did. By such trivialities are men judged!

As a final thought I have little sympathy with those colleagues who argue that certain spellings must be preserved out of respect for the ancestry of words. "How," they ask, "would our children learn

This is the fourth in a series of exercises prepared by John Butler of Amherst College. The following exercise, on Ernest Hemingway's short story, "The Battler," is accompanied by part of a student's answer written by Alfred Soman, then a sophomore at Amherst.

Acknowledgment: The exercise is based on some very brilliant suggestions for teaching Hemingway, prepared for the staff at Amherst by Professor Benjamin-H. DeMott.

In this exercise you are asked to talk about the "form" and "content" of a work of literature, and to make a conclusion about their relation to each other.

A 1. Read the brakeman episode (p. 277, Modern Library Giant Edition of the short stories) and explain in a sentence what the brakeman means to Nick when Nick first sees him.

that Wednesday was named in honor of the great god Woden, if we should spell it Wensday?" How would they learn? Their teachers might go so far as to tell them. By the same reasoning we might insist upon designing today's motor cars in the pattern of old fashioned buggies, or surreys with a fringe on top; otherwise how will our children ever learn from what antique forms the modern automobile was evolved?

I have come to believe this about that college boy of long ago who could not spell. He must have been especially well endowed with reasoning power, logic, and common sense. While he was a small boy the prevailing fashions in spelling were forced upon him by surrounding adults, and his common sense resisted. He was told, for instance, that while "ru" looked like a word and was simple and easy to spell it meant nothing; but add an extra "t" and it became a sartorial adornment. Spell it with an "ough" and it was still pronounced the same, but meant something different. Put a "th" in front of it and it became "through"; and put an "sl" in place of the "r" and it becomes a description of our English spelling.

His youthful reasoning power, still in its formative state, resisted. But Fashion, backed by cowardly adults, kept at him, until finally his resistance broke down and all of his spelling ran amok — or amuck, if you prefer it that way; the dictionary won't tell you which, because it too is cowardly, and waiting for Fashion to decide.

P. S. Why should not C.E.A. revive the movement for spelling reform instead of trying to Christianize Big Business?

Burges Johnson

Exercise In Literary Understanding

2. Explain what the brakeman means to Nick at the end of their encounter.

B 3. Briefly explain what the firelight means to Nick when he first sees it (228).

4. Re-read the last sentence of the story and again briefly define "firelight"—that is, what does it now mean to Nick?

C What pattern can you see in what you have described in A and B above? On the basis of the changes you have pointed out between 1 and 2, and between 3 and 4, make a tentative statement which tells what this story seems to be about. Find and describe at least two changes (more if you can), similar to those you described in A & B, which also are part of the pattern you defined in C. To do this you will have to give the story at least a couple of careful re-readings.

E Now, by re-arranging and adding to your answers above, write an essay of about 750 words in which you explain the function of the structure (the ordering of parts) in creating the meaning of this story. In this essay, you must discuss more fully the changes you have described above as making up a "pattern," and you must enlarge on your provisional statement (C above) of the story's main meaning. End your essay with a paragraph in which you discuss in general terms the relation between form and content.

A Student's Answer —

by Alfred Soman

When Nick first sees him, the brakeman is someone who has something for him: something good. At the end of their encounter, the brakeman is a "lousy crut" because what he had for Nick turned out to be a sock in the eye: something bad.

At first sight the fire is something attractive to Nick. It carries perhaps the prospects of warmth, food, and companionship. But at the end of the story, the firelight has changed in meaning. Now, although it means a ham sandwich, it also means an unpleasant experience: a near fight with a prizefighter, and a rather depressing character.

If these changes in meaning for Nick and his attitudes toward them can be construed as constituting a pattern of action, we can arrive at a tentative statement about the meaning of "The Battler." The pattern that seems to present itself here is one where the attractive turns out to be unpleasant because of the unforeseen. In other words, beckoning becomes repulse. That pattern suggests an interpretation of the title of the story, so we can think of the battler (Nick?) as being at first beckoned by an incipient situation and then rejected as the situation develops.

Other changes can be discovered which fill out the picture of our (Please Turn To Page 4)

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(Continued From Page 3)
pattern and make it possible to determine its extent. Within the larger episode of the firelight, there are several beckon-repulsé cycles which we can think of as combining to make the larger cycle. There is Ad's invitation: "Look here!" (at his misshapen and mutilated ears). Here the repulsé can be found in "It made him (Nick) a little sick." Later, Ad says, "Try and hit me . . . Come on lead at me." This time, however, there is no repulsé after the invitation: the very invitation itself is a repulsé. When we remember how cautiously Nick approached the fire from the track, the pattern seems to include a learning process which results from the cycles of beckon-repulsé. That is, the hurt is less and less violent, and Nick is quicker to perceive its imminence. Keeping this idea of a learning process in mind, let us examine other changes to see whether they correspond to it.

The episode of Ad and his "sister" also appears to fall into the pattern. She was an "awful good-looking woman," and "one day she just went off and never came back." Such an occurrence of the pattern indicates that Ad, the logical impersonation of the Battler, is closely related to Nick, and that Nick is not the only one to be beckoned and repulsed. Other repetitions of the pattern with respect to Ad bear this out. He can only regard Nick's refusal to give him the knife as an invitation to fight; his repulsé is a tap with a blackjack. His call to prize fighting has left him a battered face. This is analogous to Nick's black eye, which he (Nick) does not entirely regard as something bad: "He wished he could see it." And he did say to Ad, "You got to be tough."

In each repetition of the pattern, Nick (or Ad) comes away with something: a black eye, a sandwich, or the money which Ad gets from the woman. In Nick's case this seems to be an improving process; shiner to sandwich (not forgetting the unpleasant aspect of the firelight). In Ad's case, the reverse seems to be true: money (remembering also the hurt resulting from her desertion of him) to blackjack. In this last episode ("He won't remember nothing of it") there is no learning process.

The way to clarify this tentative relationship between Nick and Ad is to examine the remaining character, Bugs, if possible in relationship to the pattern we have observed. The beckon-repulsé can be seen in this statement: "I thought things were going to be all right." But he had to knock him out, and he says, "I hate to have to thump him." Yet this is a different kind

ANNUAL MEETING - 1955 (Continued From Page 1)

elections as follows.

President: Bruce Dearing, Swarthmore College

Vice Presidents: First Vice President Harry R. Warfel, University of Florida

Second Vice President, Henry W. Sams, University of Chicago

Directors for three-year terms: John Ciardi, Rutgers University, Carvel Collins, MIT, Kenneth L. Knickbocker, University of Tennessee

Director for one year: (automatic, as outgoing president) Katharine Koller, University of Rochester

1956 Nominating Committee: John W. Ball, Miami University, Chairman, Ernest E. Leisy, Southern Methodist University, Harry Moore, Babson Institute

The outgoing directors are Ernest E. Leisy, Edward J. Foster (Georgia Institute of Technology) Henry W. Sams, and Harry R. Warfel. Outgoing Vice-Presidents: Bruce Dearing, Normal Holmes Pearson (Yale University).

In the absence of Treasurer Albert P. Madeira, the Executive Secretary on instruction from the chair, summarized the financial reports and the 1954 auditor's report submitted by the Treasurer. These were favorably received and are now appended to the Secretary's present report.

On instructions from the chair, the Secretary presented selections from his 1955 Executive Secretary's Report. Following queries and discussion, these were favorably received; and the full report is now appended to the present report.

As Committee Chairman, Bruce Dearing presented the final phases of the report of the Committee on Organization and By-Laws. The full report involved: (1). the draft version of the By-Laws as published in *The CEA Critic* for October, 1955; (2). supplementary modifications appearing in the *Critics* for November and December of hurt from a black eye. It is the kind of hurt which only a person who has reached a certain degree of maturity can experience. For it is obvious that Bugs is more worldly wise than either the crazy Ad or the youthful Nick. His very manner of talking, the excessive politeness, is indicative of this.

Thus it appears that "The Battler" is a story about growing up or maturing in terms of a pattern which makes that growth possible. Nick's encounters have caused him to develop from the Ad-like tough kid with the shiner to the Bug-like Nick who walks away from the fire, repulsed this time with a more mature hurt . . .

ber. The modifications, both favorably acted upon, were as follows:

1. That, without altering the statement of specification of his duties and responsibilities, the title of the Executive Secretary be changed to Executive Director.

(Professor Dearing stated that the purpose of this change was twofold: to take account of the real nature of the duties the Executive Secretary has performed since the inception of CEA, and to improve his status in protocol for the discharge of his duties in relation to other professional organizations, foundations, and institutions.)

2. That Article XIII, dealing with "Disposition of Funds", be amended to read as follows: The corporation shall continue in effect until dissolved or annulled (a). by vote of a two-thirds majority of the members of the association, either present in person or voting by mail, at a general meeting called by the President of the association for the express purpose, or (b). by action of legally constituted civil authority.

In the event of such dissolution or annulment, the assets of the corporation shall be turned over by the treasurer of the association to similar education organizations engaged in the same or related fields of endeavor, such organizations to be determined by a majority of the officers and directors at the time of said dissolution or annulment.

Prof. Koller presented extracts from the reports of the following committees: Publications (Harry R. Warfel, Chairman); CEA Institute (Donald J. Lloyd, Chairman); Research and Grants (Henry W.

Sams, Chairman): Ph.D. Curriculum and Preparation for Teaching (Alvan S. Ryan, Chairman); National-Regional Relations (Franklin Norvish, Chairman); "Ongoing" CEA Concerns (Carl Lefevre, Chairman).

In accordance with a recommendation made in Prof. Warfel's report, it was voted that this Committee on Publications be continued for a year or more.

Prof. Koller invited discussion as to whether or not the CEA Institute activities were draining CEA energies from other important CEA concerns; and, from the floor, this question was put to the Executive Secretary.

In response, it was pointed out that, actually, Institute-engendered energies and resources are now being channelled back, in part, into other CEA activities and services and were strengthening them.

The following were cited as examples: (1). the expanded CEA headquarters personnel and facilities, which make possible more intensive services to non-Institute, as well as to Institute concerns of the CEA; (2). the June meeting, at the University of Massachusetts, of national CEA officers and directors and of regional CEA leaders; (3). the several activities connected with the annual December sessions; (4). the Executive Secretary's CEA-related travel; (5). publications dealing with non-Institute, as well as Institute-related concerns, as, for example. The 1954 CEA Symposium—*Seeing It Whole*; (6). CEA-Institute sponsored conference and research activities designed to advance, directly, the effectiveness

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Annual Program

Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois, December 27, 1955

"Teaching Translations"

Maurice B. Cramer presided at the CEA program, which began at 2 p.m. The first speaker on the panel, Bernard Schilling of the Univ. of Rochester, defended the use of translations in the classroom. They free us from the pedantry of grammar and, even though some aesthetic value may be lost, they preserve and hand on cultural and humanistic values. They can bring to us the message of antiquity and of other cultures beside our own. As an example of

of college English teaching, including the immediately communicative aspects of such teaching — and learning.

It was urged that the Executive Director be instructed to see to it that a seventy-five page report (of the CEA Chap Book size) be prepared and published, giving an interpretive and evaluative history of the CEA Institute from its inception to date.

The suggestion was made that the report of the Committee on the CEA Institute be supplemented with a statement specifying what the CEA Institute should do toward completing tasks appropriate to it, yet to date not fully developed. It was urged that Institute sessions be provided at which the immediately communicative aspects of English studies be stressed.

The concluding paragraph of this report was singled out for special commendation; and it was observed that, if the CEA lived up to the picture it drew, the Association would not fall into the danger of becoming "just another educational organization."

It was explained that the Committee on "Ongoing" CEA concerns would present its report at the June, 1956, meeting of national officers and directors, to be held at the University of Massachusetts.

Following discussion of each, the several Committee reports were favorably received and are now appended to the present report.

President Koller thanked Profs. Sams, Ham, Kolb, and the other members of the local committee on arrangements for all they had done to make our 1955 annual sessions successful; and she commended her fellow officers and directors, the chairmen and members of national CEA committees, the regional CEA leaders, the national CEA office staff, and the many other CEA members who had helped to make this so meaningful a year in terms of CEA organization, service, and development.

Maxwell H. Goldberg
Secretary

an important translation Professor Schilling cited the Chapman Homer which holds such a high place in English literature.

Knox C. Hill of the Univ. of Chicago stated that the advantages of speed and ease of comprehension tend to offset the losses in reading translations. Of course great literature is essentially untranslatable; but even if we read the original we cannot get everything, and certainly translations give us something of the original. All teaching and critical discussion involve translation anyway, so we cannot get along without it. The risks we must run are worth the result and can be guarded against by using competent versions.

Many of the best critical comments are based on knowledge gained from translations. Shakespeare criticism, for instance, would be much less rich if all the comments made by those who read Shakespeare in translation were destroyed. And reading in the original is no guarantee against misunderstanding. Indeed, the foreign reader has a certain advantage in that he is less likely to stick too close to the words; he can get to the thoughts which, as Dryden and Johnson tell us, are of prime importance. Intellectual remoteness is sometimes necessary for full appreciation.

Mitford Matthews, editor of the Dictionary of Americanisms and on the editorial staff of the Dictionary of American English, took the place on the panel of John Ciardi who was ill. He carried the position of the other panel members one step further by stating that all teaching, even in one's native tongue, involves translation, since one must interpret changing meanings and usages. Therefore even if the teacher is as expert as a native in another language, he will still have to translate. To illustrate his point, he cited two passages from Whittier's *Snowbound* which are easily misunderstood unless the reader knows the local usages and customs which Whittier had in mind as he wrote them.

In the discussion which followed the panel several valuable teaching devices were mentioned for interesting students in getting closer to the original, such as reciting short passages in the author's tongue, writing a passage on the board, leading students to compare various translations, etc. It was generally agreed that whenever possible the teacher himself should know the original, not just the translation. The point was made too that each generation should

A CHAUCER RECORDING

A major contribution to the growing repertoire of spoken literature available on records is a group of selections from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, comprising the first album issued under the label of a New York organization called The Spoken Word Inc. On four double-faced, long-playing (33rpm) records, pressed from tapes originally made for a BBC Third Program series in 1949, this album offers dramatized readings of the Prologue, the Monk's Tale, the Nun's priest's Tale, the Reeve's Tale, the Manciple's Tale, and the Man of Law's Preamble and Tale, all in Nevil Coghill's celebrated translation into modern verse.

With the exception of considerable abridgment in the Monk's Tale (fewer than half of the exemplary "tragedies" are included), the tales are only very slightly cut, and the Prologue is presented in its entirety. Brief introductory comments to each tale are offered by Coghill, who also prefaces Cecil Truncer's superbly varied and authoritative delivery of the Prologue by reading the opening lines in the original Middle English.

This album is an important offering on various grounds. Coghill's translation is a uniquely successful effort to render Chaucer in lucid, vivid, idiomatic present-day English, while preserving with endless ingenuity not only the rhyme and meter but the savor and swing of the original. What is most striking on these records, however, is how Coghill's version serves to expose the drama in Chaucer. The dramatic qualities of the tales—their charming interplay of characters and their shrewd manipulation of series of actions—are revealed on these records by a group of actors whose skill in speaking the verse is matched by their adroitness in suggesting the personalities of some of Chaucer's most richly conceived figures. Cecil Truncer, a distinguished Old Vic

actor, reads the Prologue and impersonates Chaucer in several of the tales as if he had made a career of studying the poetic and dramatic values in Coghill's version of the Tales. And his reading is matched by that of his colleagues, notably by Malcolm Graeme as the Host, and—in the buoyant and delighted version of the Nun's Priest's Tale—by Betty Hardy as Pertelote and Deryck Guyler as Chanticleer.

There can, one supposes, be scholarly objections to this dramatic rendering of Chaucer, though it should be noted that the assignment of roles in the tales to different readers involves no loss of the remarkable fidelity — often in letter as well as in spirit — that characterizes Coghill's translation. And whatever the possible reservations about Coghill's particular job of translation and "dramatization," there can surely be none about the value of making Chaucer available on records as an aural experience, which can at the very least serve to supplement study of the text on the page.

As teachers of modern poetry have found unique instructional values in such records as those made of their own work by Eliot and Frost and Dylan Thomas, so one feels—may teachers of Chaucer (one is tempted to add—"and of Spenser, Burns, Browning, et al") find unique values in such a recording as this. The prospect of having an increasing measure of our poetic heritage available as spoken literature in authoritative recordings is an immensely exciting one; of the recent offerings, this is one of the best conceived and most skilfully executed.

The album is available from The Spoken Word Inc., 10 East 39 St., New York 16, N. Y. The price—twenty dollars for the four-record album—is in line with that of other recordings in the field, though the technical level of the processing is considerably superior to the usual run; the sound is clear and spacious, the record surfaces quiet, and the packaging attractive. One would, however, welcome more information than the album offers concerning the circumstances of the original BBC broadcast, and one might take exception to the fact that the four disks, though presumably not available separately, are not pressed in automatic sequence for the most convenient use on a drop-changer. And the album not only fails to offer the text of the tales included; it fails even to indicate where cuts have been made.

Seymour Rudin
University of Massachusetts

prepare its own translation to keep in touch with the idiom of the contemporary reader. As a final argument, the Bible itself was cited. How many of those who have come under its profound influence have had access to the full power of the Hebrew original?

No one seemed to wish to bar the English teacher from teaching books from other languages, provided his own training was adequate to prepare him to do the work.

It is hoped that some of the papers presented on this annual meeting program may be published in subsequent issues of *The Critic*.

HUMANITIES RESEARCH AS CREATION

(Continued From Page 1)

for example, physics. Here the most elementary course is supposed to give some glimpse into what has been going on lately in physics; and the introductory course in economics is supposed to bring you up to date in the world of economics. Indeed, in science and in social science, it is true, is it not, that this current of fresh ideas comes constantly from the research activities of the people in the field—and in these fields this notion of research activity is accepted as a matter of course.

This is precisely, it seems to me, what raises the problem before the Conference. We train so many technologists for so many research activities. The argument follows that these people are narrowly trained, and the narrowness of their training is to be compensated by the humanists. The curious thing is the implicit inference that, therefore, the humanist must not do any research work at all. Now this I submit is a very dangerous assumption, and a very dangerous matter in our culture.

Sometimes I feel that scholarship has become an obsolescent word, and that "research in the humanities" is one of those phrases that seems somehow slightly obscene. How are we to secure this constant current of bright and original ideas in the humanist except in the same way that we secure a constant current of fresh ideas in the sciences and in the social sciences? And where or what is it we are to explore? Well, primarily, it seems to me our duty is the exploration and the revaluation of

the past. It is the exploration and revaluation of what we call civilization, something to which you cannot possibly apply statistical analyses.

I submit likewise, with all deference to John Burchard, that to say with him, that the humanities are all right—getting along pretty well because there is such an interest today in the contemporary creating of works of art—is to deal with only one part of the problem. Mr. Burchard also said, and I know he will forgive me for questioning him on this point, that there is nothing wrong with the humanities that a little money will not cure.

Well, three years ago, statisticians in the Social Science Research Council, upon investigation, discovered that the average amount of research money paid out in this country to support somebody in the exact sciences was \$1800 per year, in the social sciences \$600 per year, in the humanities \$130 per year. They made another investigation to discover what amount of research money is paid out in brackets of \$5000. We discovered that we are subsidizing research by scientists in this country per year at a \$5000 level or better, at the rate of 14 or 15 times the amount of subsidy we are giving research in the humanities.

I suggest that if, in this society, you put fourteen and fifteen times the amount of money into research work in the exact sciences, and six or seven times as much money into social sciences as you put into the humanities, the inference to young minds is irresistible, that your society values these various areas of learning in something like the proportion of fifteen and six to one. If you pay out \$15 for the creative work in the sciences as against \$1.00 for creative work in scholarship in the humanities, you are not going to get creative scholarship in any such proportion as this society deserves. Your culture, your education, your whole national philosophy is at this point badly out of balance; and as the years go by, it must by the very law of mathematics grow more and more out of balance.

Until industry, until government, until the great foundations are prepared to pay proportionately more for the continuation and the increase of creative scholarship in the humanities than they are now paying, you will not attract a sufficient number of brilliant young minds into the humanities and you will get the B and B plus minds inevitably, and these same minds will get into the classrooms, and you will not get in the classroom in this same way, ladies and gentlemen, the tingling excitement of in-

tellectual discovery that you get in the sciences and in the social sciences.

I also suggest that, as a nation, with the exception of one or two ideas, we have been living, in what we customarily call the humanities, for one hundred and fifty years on the accumulated intellectual capital of Europe. As a matter of fact, in this country, we have added very little to the intellectual capital of Europe although we pride ourselves upon our capacity to conduct admirable investigations.

Now I want to return, if I may, to that brilliant introductory speech on Law, Freedom, and Liberal Education, by Mr. Sol Linowitz* at our opening luncheon yesterday. It is the same kind of thing to which Mr. Robert Blakely** referred, and to which some others have referred. It is the desperate need of a philosophical defense of the democratic system. And I say a desperate need of a philosophical defense of the democratic system, for these reasons. The democratic system with us, begun on a series of the 18th century postulates, has either been altered, questioned, or perhaps indeed destroyed in the last 150 years. Unless we can find creative humanists—by which I mean philosophers, metaphysicians, teachers of the arts, teachers of the languages, teachers of the great traditions of music and of the fine arts—unless we can get people who will give us something more than a thin commonplace defense of the very ideas upon which this Republic stands, unless we can bring to the Twentieth Century man in 1955 an appropriate philosophical defense of the very culture in which we live, this culture will inevitably move over to that of Mr. Orwell's 1984 as if we had no such defense at all.

I suggest that teaching is a great and glorious art, but that

*Published in College and University. A graduate of Hamilton College and Cornell Law School and a member of the Rochester law firm of Sutherland, Linowitz, and Williams, Mr. Sol M. Linowitz is a trustee of the University of Rochester. He is presently New York State Chairman and a member of the Board of Governors for the United Nations, and of the International Law Committees of the American Bar Association and of the New York State Bar Association.

**Manager, Central Regional Office, Fund for Adult Education. Mr. Blakely spoke, at Schenectady, on the subject "Liberal Education, the Quest for Quality, and the Creative Maverick."

the opposition which is sometimes set up between the scholar and the teacher—between doing research in the humanities and appreciating fine arts—is for the most part a false opposition, and one which I—in my place—thoroughly deplore.

LESSON IN PHONETICS

If ew is spelled trewly in blew
Then why don't we follow it threw
And stick with it tightly in glew
Or even in shew and in wew?

Or tewrning ewr thinking arewnd
We ewght tew pronewnce ou tew
sewnd

Like ew wherever it's fewnd —
In bewght, in wrewght, or in
wewnd.

Then ewnce wewld rhyme ever
with bewnce
And hewse wewld dew dewty tew
spewce.

Jewn, then, and mewn, and even
lagewn

Wewld sewnd as they're spelled,
I presewn.

James Burke

University of Massachusetts

The Music Corporation of America, 598 Madison Ave., New York City, would appreciate suggestions from English teachers concerning literary achievements which they personally would like to see presented in dramatic form. A list of some ten "literary standards" would be most helpful in their creative endeavors.

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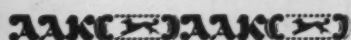
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Conrad Evaluated

Harvey Breit, in his "In and Out of Books" column, quotes from Doris E. Abramson of the Univ. of Mass.: "Just when I'd begun to lose faith in the reading habits of youngsters, an 11-year-old boy informed me that he was reading stories by Joseph Conrad. 'Know what I like about his stories? Well, I hate stories where someone says, I opened the hatch, then in a minute, I was in the hold of the ship. Joseph Conrad says, I opened the hatch. Then I shut it behind me and stood in darkness, feeling for

the wall. He tells you what happens every minute, the way it is really.'"

CEA DIRECTORS BREAKFAST AT CHICAGO

Tuesday, Dec. 27, 1955, was a full day for CEAs at Chicago. It opened with an invitational breakfast for CEA officers, regional directors, and CEA staff members. Chief topic of discussion: how the many local CEA members throughout the country can be linked more closely with the national organization.

Everyone seemed to feel that a closer linkage will strengthen the national organization and also make the local member more aware of the value of CEA. But it is clear that circumstances differ so greatly from one part of the country to another that no rigid rule of membership should be imposed immediately. The suggestion most strongly favored was that the organization might work toward an eventual rule that all local members must be national members, paying a portion of their regional dues to the national headquarters for The CEA Critic and other services.

The regional directors were requested to take this problem back to their organizations for discussion, to see what kind of an arrangement their constituents would favor. Of course, non-CEA members should continue to be invited to meetings to acquaint themselves with the organization; but after they have attended, everything possible should be done to win them for permanent membership, both local and national.

Other topics discussed included the geographical divisioning of local territories, the establishment of new CEA regional groups, the effectiveness of The Critic as a national organ, and the planning of regional and national programs. It was agreed that the breakfast for regional leaders — or a similar event — should be made a regular feature of the annual sessions. The plans for having sessions for regional leaders, at the 1956 June session at the Univ. of Massachusetts, were welcomed.

Leland Miles and Frank Baker of Hanover College have written *A Brief Guide to Writing Term Papers*, published by William C. Brown Co. of Dubuque, Iowa. The presentation is informal and the authors do everything possible to make the dreaded research paper of the freshman year an enjoyable and valuable experience. The booklet is copiously illustrated and presents the necessary factual information in a disarmingly pleasant way. It costs 75 cents a copy.

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WHICH SHALL IT BE?

I have two well-formed convictions. But they are mutually antagonistic, and I am at a loss to know what to do about them: (1) More people, provided they have some ripeness in language, should try to write. It is possible to read one's self dumb; but the effort at writing is a saving discipline, because it leads, however painfully, to inner clarification of one's own ideas. Editors may shake their heads at the thought of more hundreds of amorphous manuscripts crowding upon their desks, but should be willing, in the interests of the general good, to treat them kindly, if firmly.

(2) Writing involves travail. And so much of it is futile, here today, buried tomorrow, never to know a resurrection. The writer sits in his dusty quarters grinding out matter for print about which not even the immediate world has any lively concern, meanwhile becoming unfit for companionship with his wife, his children, or his dog. For the last I reserve a special pity.

There is so much that is beautiful that might better occupy the attention of those without great talent for the pen, or without ideas that the world will not willingly let die, such as good reading, cultivation of a garden, the planting and care of flowers and trees, interest and participation in art and music, and communion with good friends.

A. M. Withers
Virginia Polytechnic Institute

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LAMBDA IOTA TAU

The purpose of Lambda Iota Tau, National Collegiate Honorary Society for students in English and Foreign Languages is the recognition and promotion of excellence in the study of any literature. Lambda Iota Tau is a confederation of local chapters, each working locally toward recognition and promotion of the study of literature on its own campus, but associated with the other chapters in the National Organization for the mutual support of all chapters.

The Honorary Society, Lambda Iota Tau, was founded in December, 1953. Since the national incorporation in March, 1954, thirty-six chapters have been organized in colleges and universities of sixteen states and one territory: Michigan, South Dakota, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Utah, Minnesota, Illinois, Maryland, Kansas, Massachusetts, California, Kentucky, Alabama, Oregon, Mississippi, North Dakota, New York, and Puerto Rico. After each chapter is chartered by the national executive secretary it functions autonomously. A moderator with two qualified students may apply for a chapter.

A local unit of Lambda Iota Tau may be organized at any senior college or university offering an English and/or a Foreign Language major. The requirements for candidates may vary somewhat — but the grade average in the minimal number of credit hours in literature and/or related courses should be of reasonably high standard, according to local conditions, in order to insure the preservation of the honorary principle. The local chapter will determine the nature of the faculty recommendation of the candidates for membership.

Each candidate, to complete his initiation requirements, must submit to the moderator, or faculty sponsor of the chapter, a paper on a literary topic. Later, this paper is to be presented orally, or published if the chapter has such facilities.

Lambda Iota Tau has been mentioned in College English, PMLA, and CEA Critic. Additional information will be furnished to those who are interested in forming local chapters of this National Collegiate Honorary Society for students of English and Foreign Languages.

John A. Nist
National Executive Secretary
Michigan State Normal College

Undergraduate Poetry Contest

An award of one hundred dollars will be made by the Lyric Foundation for Traditional Poetry for the best original, unpublished traditional poem of 32 lines or less written by an enrolled undergrad-

uate in any American or Canadian college or university. Poems should be mailed not later than June 1, 1956, to The Lyric, P. O. Box 390, Christiansburg, Virginia. An added award of one hundred dollars will be made to the library of the college, provided that library already subscribes to The Lyric.

W. R. Coe Fellowships in
American Studies

Eight fellowships for graduate work in American Studies are awarded annually at the University of Wyoming under an endowment established by the late William Robertson Coe. The awards include tuition and stipends ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000, depending upon the needs and responsibilities of the recipients.

Graduates or graduating seniors of accredited colleges who are interested in study at the master's level are eligible. Candidacy for a master's degree is not required, however. Recipients must major in American Civilization, an interdepartmental program involving an American Studies seminar and approximately equal distribution of courses in three areas: (1). History, (2). Literature, and (3). the other Social Sciences and Humanities.

Applications for the following academic year will be accepted until March first. For further information address Director of American Studies, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming.

Brandeis University Fellowships

Graduate Fellowships will be awarded in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Brandeis University for the academic year 1956-57 to a limited number of qualified graduate students. The fellowships include stipends, tuition and fees, up to \$2,100. Several will be reserved for writers of promise who wish to pursue a traditional academic career. These awards will be made on a competitive basis to men and women candidates. Applications must be filed before April 1, 1956. Direct inquiries to: Chairman, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Brandeis University, Waltham 54, Massachusetts.

INDIANA CEA

The officers for 1955-56 are as follows: President, Elijah Jacobs; Franklin College, Franklin, Indiana; Vice-President, Frederick Bergmann, DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana; Secretary-Treasurer, Florence Hilbish, Taylor University, Upland, Indiana.

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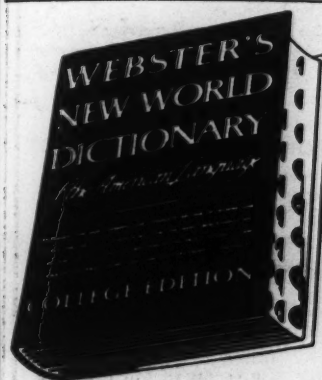
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